

METHOD OF OPERATING A SATELLITE FOR END-OF-LIFE MANEUVERS

Abstract

A method for operating a satellite (10, 34) so that a predetermined amount of propellant is left to perform end-of-life maneuvers is provided. A first pressure differential is established between a first propellant tank (74) and a second propellant tank (76) by pressurizing the first tank (76) with a pressurant. Propellant is transferred from the first tank (74) to the second tank (76). Using precise control during transfer the amount of propellant in the tanks may be determined. The second tank is used for orbit maintenance. The first tank is used for end-of-life maneuvers. Propellant may be transferred between the tanks using a latching process so that a predetermined amount of propellant may be transferred from a non-empty tank to a full tank.